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## A Sense of Peace and Sharing

By Paul Richard

The nicest thing about the Beverly Court Show, now at the Pyramid Galleries, is the sense of peace.

For all too many years now, the art world of this city has seemed a kind of battleground. The competition has been killing; and while our artists fought like soldiers in the ceaseless revolution, their art took on a hardness, a militance, an edge.

This exhibition's different. The Beverly Court Show is so pretty and so full of sharing that it seems to tell the art scene a new warmth is in the air.

Don't expect a single conquering style, a new look, a new technique. The Beverly Court Artists will not issue manifestos, for some of them see unicorns and some of them take photographs and some are Color Painters and there is no enmity they share.

All of them are young, most still in their 20s. There are 10 Beverly Court artists, but because this show is something of an accident there might well have been more.

It is Beverly Court that nourished them. None of them—and none of us who know them—could have guessed a year ago at the gifts it would provide.

Beverly Court is an old Washington apartment building on Columbia Road NW, no longer quite so elegant as its placid name. The 10 artists in this show all now live or work there. The elevator creaks, the faucets sometimes drip, but Mr. and Mrs. Mills, the managers, treat them with affection. The light is nothing special, but the apartments that surround its pigeon-infested air shaft are graced by columns and by archways. Their rooms are numerous and large.

Beverly Court is not a commune, but a building full of studios, and the artists there have grown in one another's

presence. There's a special spirit in the air there. It is open and inclusive and mutually supportive.

But, at least at first glance, the art that they've produced could hardly vary more.

Yuri Schwebler is a conceptualist. Allan Bridge and Karen Gulmon are both Washington Color Painters. If you called Gay Glading's work lyrical abstraction, you might say Manon Cleary does lyrical photo realism. Kristen Moeller draws, and so does Roger Tripp; but while he shows us common objects, her visions are fantastic. Angelo Hodick is a lithographer and painter; Jonathan Meader makes silk-screen prints and etchings; Allan Appel prints his photographs on canvas and he colors them by hand.

"Visionary Fantasy," "Conceptual Art," "Photo Realism," "Lyrical Abstraction"—the words themselves sound as if they ought to be at war. But an extraordinary peace pervades this united show.

Because these artists are so close, because they support each other, their work has taken on an unusual conviction. And because they've learned to see their own art through one another's eyes, this show has an even accessibility that the viewer, too, can share.

Even when they show us technical virtuosity, their skill is always calm, it wears no chip upon its shoulder. This exhibition's warm. It does not dare the viewer.

No Washingtonian has made a silk-screen print more meticulous or magical than Jonathan Meader's unicorn in moonlight. Gay Glading's calligraphic fields are musical and free. Allen Appel's images, faded by nostalgia, seem to have the weight of moments from your past. And when Kristen Moeller draws leafy woods and butterflies, sea shells and giraffes, you wish that you

could close your eyes and see the things she dreams.

Allan Bridge mixes scores of colors, some so subtle that you hardly see them. Yuri Schwebler's shining and transparent column is made with sheets of glass and brass and string. The lines they use are straight, their geometry is clean, but all hardness has been softened.

And there is no one hereabouts who can draw like Manon Cleary. Her portraits of her friends look, at first, like photographs, for no handwriting, no gesture, disturbs their pencilled surfaces; but no camera could find such beauty in her subjects, for the beauty is not theirs, it's an invention of Manon's.

I saw it happen, but I still don't fully understand what made this exhibition blossom. Gay Glading has shown before here at Henri's, and so have Hodick (Jefferson Place), Manon Cleary (Bader's), Meader (The Workshop and at Lunn's), and Schwebler (at Protetch-Rivkin), but it is as if all these artists have grown in unison specially for this show.

Another kind of energy gathered in this city a dozen years ago, but the Washington Color Painters, despite all their pictures seem to share, hardly talk to one another.

Another sort of sharing, a sharing that encourages, that does not limit freedom, is emerging here today. It has been enriched by Lou Stovall's Workshop (Appel and Meader worked there), by the studio shows of Bob Stark and Lucy Clark (Allan Bridge first showed there), and by other gatherings of artists now coalescing here. But that mutually supporting, noncompetitive spirit has not yet produced works of greater promise than those on view in the Beverly Court Show. It will be at the Pyramid, 2121 P St. NW, through Jan. 31.